



# ONE VIRGINIA NEWS

Inclusive Excellence in the Commonwealth

NEW THIS MONTH

June 2021 Vol. 1

## ONE VIRGINIA NEWS

The *One Virginia Plan* Online Toolkit continues to expand DE&I throughout Virginia.

## SUCCESS STORIES

Elite Business Strategies and Greene Street Communications join efforts with the ELT.

## DE&I RESOURCES

Help us celebrate diversity and inclusion this month.

## INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

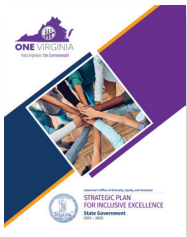
Insight on the Office of New Americans.

## INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to the June edition of *One Virginia News*.** This month, we'll highlight the coordinated community engagement and outreach efforts from Elite Business Strategies and Greene Street Communications, commemorate Juneteenth, celebrate Immigrant Heritage and Pride Month, and learn more about the continued roll-out of the *One Virginia Plan* and those instrumental in making change in the Commonwealth.

At the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) we continue our work to develop a framework of inclusive excellence. As Virginia paves the way as the model of equity, we want to make it a lasting beacon of inclusive excellence across the country. The *ONE Virginia Plan* operationalizes diversity, equity, and inclusion for your organization. We'll also provide resources and strategies to develop your own plan. [Click here](#) to start your plan.

## ONE VIRGINIA NEWS



### **The *One Virginia Plan* Online Toolkit continues to expand DE&I throughout Virginia**

The *ONE Virginia Plan* expands its successful roll-out across the Commonwealth, implementing the Inclusive Excellence framework. The plan creates collective impact, sustainable change, innovation, and productivity across state government and other sectors of Virginia. State agencies and higher education institutions are adopting the toolkit and beginning the long-needed change to acknowledge and address structural inequity in their systems, policies, and formal and informal practices. Pilot programs in cities such as Harrisonburg and Charlottesville are addressing inequities among the most underserved. Through a data-driven process, much needed resources are equitably distributed to those individuals and communities that have historically been overlooked. As Inclusive Excellence expands, it gives Virginia a business advantage and makes the state a more attractive place to live, learn, work, visit, and thrive.

Download your *One Virginia Plan* Online Toolkit [here](#).

### **Equity Dashboards are here!**

The Equity Leadership Taskforce has been sharing the dashboards with stakeholders to encourage the use of the data available on the dashboards and collect feedback on what is useful to Virginians. All across the Commonwealth, the ELT have met with faith leaders, state agency leaders, elected officials, the Virginia Community Action Partnership, and businesses to share the unprecedented value of this data. Additionally, they shared these dashboards with the White House COVID-19 Response Team as a way to examine how social determinants of health metrics may impact the COVID response at local levels in Virginia.

These dashboards utilize a data-driven approach for leaders to close disparity gaps and improve Virginians' access to COVID resources through identifiable performance metrics. The Equity-in-Action dashboard spotlights the progress Virginia has made in allocating COVID-19 resources to vulnerable populations, and the Equity-at-a-Glance dashboard provides data to policy makers to inform future allocation of COVID resources to vulnerable and under-resourced communities.

## ONE VIRGINIA NEWS (CONTINUED)

### So where does Virginia rank within the key metrics?



#### Equity-in-Action: Virginia's COVID-19 Efforts.

As part of Virginia's COVID-19 pandemic response, the Equity Leadership Taskforce, along with state and local partners, distributed 1.9M units of PPE to at-risk and underserved communities using a data-driven approach to allocate resources.



#### Equity-at-a-Glance: Where does Virginia rank in Housing Insecurity?

At 25th in the nation, Virginia reports 12.5% of households spend over half of their income on housing, as compared to the national average of 14.2%. This summer Governor Northam and the General Assembly will further invest in public health by helping people with the cost of housing and utilities.

Learn more about where Virginia ranks with the Equity Dashboards [here](#).

### Why a data-driven process is important when addressing equity-related reform.

As explained in the May/June [One Virginia News](#), Virginia's newly launched Equity Dashboards provide a transparent view of how the Commonwealth and each of its 95 counties and 38 independent cities compare with other communities across several different social determinants of health.

These factors are important to the overall health of Virginians, especially those recovering from COVID-19. Some of the key areas of comparison include income and poverty, educational attainment, unemployment, housing affordability, food security, and access to reliable, high-speed internet. By objectively measuring the status of these social determinants of health across neighborhoods and between race/ethnicity groups, leaders can direct resources to those communities and people who are most in need.

Thus, in reaction to House Joint Resolution 537 (HJR 537), the declaration of racism as a public health crisis, the Task Force created these two equity dashboards to assist in making inequity visible and less nebulous across many of the social determinants of health listed in HJR 537.

In pursuit of inclusive excellence, we encourage all leaders and decision-makers to leverage these dashboards and other [ONE Virginia](#) resources to prioritize under-resourced and under-represented communities as we attempt to recover from a once in a lifetime global pandemic. Learn more [here](#).

## SUCCESS STORIES



### Elite Business Strategies and Greene Street Communications joint COVID-19 efforts with the ELT.

*The Equity Leadership Task force (ELT) has partnered with Elite Business Strategies and Greene Street Communications to coordinate community engagement and outreach efforts to historically underserved communities.*

Elite Business Strategies has collaborated with the ELT to develop an outreach campaign to support vaccine distribution to vulnerable populations. The outreach focuses on vaccine education and awareness. They have utilized community outreach specialists to engage individuals directly in their neighborhoods. This initiative has taken a hands-on approach to pre-register and vaccinate individuals who would otherwise be hard to reach.

Greene Street Communications has worked to create a comprehensive equity-focused communications campaign on COVID-19 health awareness. The campaign delivers targeted messaging to address the full range of residents of the Commonwealth. Jamilah Fraser, the managing partner at Greene Street Communications, states, "Each different audience has its own nuances and requires a tailored approach." Communications materials target people of different ethnic groups, faith belief systems, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. This allows the messaging to be delivered in a way that is relevant to each population. These efforts contribute to increased COVID-19 awareness and vaccine distribution across the Commonwealth.

Learn more on the ELT's COVID-19 efforts [here](#).

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES

### It's PRIDE Month!



On June 28, 1969, New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village. The raid ignited a riot leading to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement. The Stonewall uprising was a catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States that spread around the globe. The Stonewall uprising didn't start the gay rights movement, but it galvanized the LGBTQ+ community. It led to commemorations in June which is now recognized as "Pride Month." This month is the acknowledgment of self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increased visibility and inclusion of those who identify in or who are allies of the LGBTQ+ community.

Virginia Governor Ralph Northam commemorated [Pride Month in June 2020](#), as sweeping new laws to expand rights and protections for LGBTQ+ individuals took effect on July 1, 2020. In June 2021, the Governor issued a [press release](#) and [proclamation](#) declaring June as LGBTQ+ Pride Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia to celebrate the state's LGBTQ+ communities and their fight for inclusion and equality. And for the first time ever, Mayor Levar Stoney has directed the City of Richmond to fly a pride flag outside of City Hall for the entirety of Pride Month.

"We are reminded of the pivotal moments when LGBTQ+ Americans stood up to demand that they be treated with respect and dignity," said Governor Northam. "As we celebrate long-overdue progress in advancing LGBTQ+ rights in our country and Commonwealth, we must also redouble our efforts to ensure Virginia is inclusive and welcoming to all—no matter who you are, who you love, or how you identify."

Learn more about Pride Month events in Virginia [here](#).

### JUNETEENTH



Juneteenth is a holiday celebrating the emancipation of people who had been enslaved in the United States. It is commemorated each year on June 19. On that date in 1865, General Gordon Granger marched his troops into Galveston and proclaimed freedom from slavery in Texas, two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had officially outlawed slavery. Texas, being the most remote of the slave states, denied freedom from slavery until General Granger and his troops enforced the emancipation of its enslaved people and nullified all laws passed in Texas during the war by Confederate lawmakers.

General Granger declared, "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor." The first celebrations began in church-centered community gatherings in Texas, spread across the South, and then the nation.

On June 19, 2021, Governor Ralph Northam [proclaimed](#) Juneteenth: Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Cel-Liberation, and Juneteenth Independence Day, making [Juneteenth](#) an officially codified and legal paid state holiday in Virginia. Governor Northam called on all Virginians to observe this part of our shared history and join in commemorative events throughout the Commonwealth. Additionally, on June 17, 2021, President Biden signed legislation making Juneteenth a federal holiday. The measure was passed in the House and Senate with bipartisan support. The law went into effect immediately, making Friday, June 18, the day of observance for the first federal Juneteenth holiday.

This year, the Commonwealth of Virginia commemorated [Juneteenth 2021 with the theme, "Our Journey to Juneteenth"](#) at Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia. The event was hosted by the Office of Governor Northam and open to all.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES (CONTINUED)



### NATIONAL IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

Join us this June as we celebrate *Immigrant Heritage Month*. This is a time for people to explore and celebrate their heritage as immigrants. As a nation of immigrants, it is the diversity of our communities that make our Commonwealth the best place to live, work, and raise a family.

Virginia has established the Office of New Americans (ONA) and the Office of New Americans Advisory Board (ONAAB) to promote immigrant integration within the Commonwealth on an economic, social, and cultural level. The ONA will strategize to improve state policies and programs to support the economic, linguistic, and civic integration of new Americans throughout the Commonwealth.

As we reflect on and celebrate *Immigrant Heritage Month*, we also honor the persistence, determination, and resilience of today's immigrant communities and strive for inclusion and equity for all.

Learn more about *Immigrant Heritage Month* [here](#).

## INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS



### Insight on the Office of New Americans.

*In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly established the Office of New Americans (ONA) within the Department of Social Services (DSS) to assist immigrant integration in the Commonwealth of Virginia on an economic, social, and cultural level.*

Mona Siddiqui, Deputy Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Policy Advisor for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, is collaborating with the ONA to promote the economic and civic success of Virginia's diverse immigrant communities.

In June we commemorate World Refugee Awareness Month and World Refugee Day (June 20). Both mark a time to acknowledge the strength, courage, and perseverance of millions of refugees who live around the globe.

"Together, ODEI and ONA are building a statewide strategy to provide immigrants with comprehensive assistance related to employment, housing, health care, education, citizenship, and other services for which they may be eligible. Doing this work is very personal for me, as it is also for many of the Office of New Americans Advisory Board (ONAAB) members who are first-generation Americans. In our first advisory board meeting, we all shared our lived experience of migration, and in doing so fostered a collective sense of empowerment in pursuit of eliminating barriers for the next generation of new immigrants, who will choose or have chosen to make Virginia their home. Immigrant integration is part of the *ONE Virginia* mission and vision."

ODEI serves as a liaison between the Governor, ONA, and ONAAB to advance immigration integration policies that improve equitable opportunities and foster a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming Commonwealth for new Americans who choose to make their home in Virginia.

Learn more about Virginia's Office of New Americans [here](#).



### Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Download the *ONE Virginia Plan* here: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/one-virginia/>

To contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, go to <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/contact-us>



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